

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BAR - BENCH - MEDIA CONFERENCE**

A meeting of the Bar-Bench-Media Conference was held on Thursday, February 29, 1996 at 1:00 p.m. in the Supreme Court Conference Room in Wilmington. The meeting was open to the public. Notice of the meeting had been posted. The members of the Conference in attendance were:

Members from the Print News Media

Rita Farrell

Members from the Electronic News Media

Marilyn Buerkle
Allen Loudell
William Osborne
Mike Sigman

Members from the Bench

Chief Magistrate Patricia W. Griffin
Justice Randy J. Holland
Judge Jay Paul James
Judge Roderick R. McKelvie
President Judge Henry duPont Ridgely

Members from the Bar

Eugene H. Bayard, Esquire
Howard Handelman, Esquire
Richard D. Kirk, Esquire
Harvey B. Rubenstein, Esquire

Judge McKelvie called the meeting to order. The minutes of the previous

meeting were approved.

Harvey Rubenstein reported that the FOIA Committee had met with representatives of the Bar Association and Common Cause to develop the FOIA program. Attorney General Brady attended the meetings. The FOIA program presented by the Bar Association and the Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, April 23, 1996 at the Dover Sheraton from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Registration will begin at 11:30 a.m. with lunch to be served at 12:00 noon. The cost of the public and media is \$35.00. The cost for lawyers is \$75.00. There will be CLE credit for the program.

The program will have two segments. From 1:15 p.m. to 2:45 p.m., there will be a discussion of the FOIA statute in lay terms. The discussion panel will consist of Richard G. Elliott, Jr., Esquire of Richards, Layton & Finger, Ralph K. Durstein, III, Esquire as a representative of Common Cause, and John K. Welch, Esquire of the Department of Justice. After a break, the second segment will be an interactive panel discussion of the statute and its application. The panel will consist of 8 - 10 people from the media, boards or agencies, Common Cause, and the Bar in a roundtable format. Charles J. Durante, Esquire will be the discussion leader. The program is to be videotaped. The Conference will request that the Bar Association make the tape available to boards, agencies and schools.

It is hoped that all members of the Conference can attend the program.

The Education Committee did not make a report. It was noted that a meeting with the Chief Magistrate and members of her staff and the media had taken place.

Dick Kirk, on behalf of the Internet Committee, asked what technological issues were of interest to the Conference. Security was mentioned as an issue.

Harvey Rubenstein reported that the Constitutional Centennial Committee was meeting, and draft chapters were being prepared. Plans are to publish a book through the Bar Association in the next year. Other plans include preparing a guide to the Constitution for public schools and preparing a brochure for Law Day. Harvey will report back when the drafts are done as to how the Conference can help with the project.

Under old business, Justice Holland reported that the Court continued to have the Conference's proposal of expanded electronic media coverage of trial court proceedings on its administrative agenda. Justice Holland noted it costs approximately \$30,000 to outfit a courtroom for electronic media coverage and that no money has been appropriated to do so. He also noted that the new Justice Center was not funded.

Harvey Rubenstein asked if the Conference should take a position on the

need for a Justice Center. He mentioned the possible benefits that such a Center would have for the media as well as the Bar and Bench. One concern raised was that the issue was outside the scope of the Conference. Harvey requested that the issue be reflected in the minutes and placed on the next agenda.

It was suggested that the Conference should look at future projects to undertake after the FOIA program. *intent?*

The next meeting of the Conference is scheduled for Tuesday, April 23, 1996 at 11:00 a.m. in the Executive Boardroom of the Dover Sheraton, 1570 North DuPont Highway before the FOIA program. The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Stephen D. Taylor

Date: April 10, 1996